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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You are high and lifted up. Deliver us from estrangement or dissension. Teach our lawmakers to disagree with respect, civility, and humility. Lord, lead them into a deeper reverence for You and one another as they remember that patriots reside on both sides of the aisle. May our Senators celebrate the pleasure You receive when colleagues of faith dwell together in unity. Let the words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts receive Your divine approval.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 1 minute in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### TAIWAN

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, as President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate, I want to recognize democracy working in Taiwan.

On Saturday, the 23 million proud people of Taiwan exercised their democratic right to select their own leaders. I congratulate President Tsai on her

reelection. I would also like to take this moment to congratulate all Taiwanese for being a shining light amidst dark times in other parts of East Asia. All of us remember what has been going on in Hong Kong for the last several months as they try to exercise just rights that the Chinese Government gave them in 1997, when they signed an agreement with the British Government turning back Hong Kong to China, and they would have the rights for the next 50 years to have the same democratic principles they had under the British Empire.

Despite continued intimidation by the Chinese Communist Party across the Taiwan Strait, this proud island stood up to protect its democracy and sovereignty. That is exemplified by the election Saturday.

Let us all congratulate the people of Taiwan for their remarkable accomplishment and continue to work in this Chamber to strengthen U.S.-Taiwan relations.

I yield the floor.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### IMPEACHMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, tomorrow will be 4 weeks—4 weeks—since House Democrats impeached the President of the United States with purely partisan support.

Speaker PELOSI and Chairman SCHIFF did not wait to fill out the factual record. They did not even wait to see their own subpoenas through the legal system. They plowed ahead for two reasons: They said impeachment was too urgent to wait—too urgent to wait—and they said they had already proven their case.

But since then, House Democrats have spent 4 weeks contradicting both

of those claims. They spent 4 weeks demonstrating through their actions that impeachment is actually not that urgent—not that urgent—and they do not actually have much confidence in their case.

An arbitrary 4-week delay does not show urgency. These demands for the Senate to precommit to reopening the House investigation do not show confidence. There is a reason why the House inquiry that led to President Nixon's resignation took 14 months of hearings in addition to the separate special prosecutor. There is a reason why the Clinton impeachment inquiry drew on years of prior investigation and mountains of testimony from firsthand fact witnesses. That is because both of those Houses of Representatives knew they had to prove their case—prove their case before submitting it to the Senate for judgment.

Both situations involved legal battles over executive privilege and extensive litigation, both times not after a trial had been handed to the Senate but beforehand. When the cases were actually being compiled, there were mountains of evidence, mountains of testimony, and long legal battles over privilege. None of this discovery took place over here in the Senate.

The Constitution gives the sole power of impeachment to the House. If the House majority wants to impeach a President, the ball is in their court, but they have to do the work. They have to prove their case. Nothing—nothing in our history or our Constitution says a House majority can pass what amounts to a half-baked censure resolution and then insist that the Senate fill in the blanks. There is no constitutional exception for a House majority with a short attention span.

I think everyone knows this process has not been some earnest, factfinding mission with House Democrats following each thread wherever it leads. The Speaker of the House did not reluctantly decide to impeach after pouring over secondhand impressions of

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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civil servants. This was a predetermined political conclusion. Members of her conference had been publicly promising it literally for years.

That is why the investigation stopped long before the House had come anywhere near proving what they allege. They pulled the plug early because the facts were never the point. They were never the point. The point was to check a political box.

For goodness' sake, the very morning after the House's historic vote, Speaker PELOSI literally chastised reporters for asking too many questions about impeachment. She tried to change the subject to economic policy. She said:

Any other questions? . . . Anybody want to talk about the SALT tax. . . . I'm not going to answer any more questions on this—

Referring to impeachment.

Really? Really? You impeach a President of the United States, and the very next morning, there is nothing to see here? Does that sound like the Speaker of the House really thinks the survival of the Republic is on the line? Does anyone really think that if Democrats truly believe the President of the United States was a criminal who is imperiling our country, they would have abandoned the search for evidence because they didn't want to make time for due process; that they would have pulled the plug on the investigation just because it sounded good to finish by Christmas; that they would have delayed the trial for months while they test-drove new talking points; that they would have been trying to change the subject 12 hours after the vote?

I cannot say what Democrats do and do not really believe, but they certainly do not seem to display the urgency or the seriousness you would expect from people who actually thought they had proven the President should be removed.

On television last weekend, the Speaker bragged that "this President is impeached for life," regardless of what the Senate does—regardless of what the Senate does, as if the ultimate verdict were sort of an afterthought.

Likewise, the Senate Democratic leader recently said that as long as he can try to use the trial process to hurt some Republicans' reelection chances, "it's a win-win." That is what this is all about. The Democratic leader just laid it right out there in case anybody had any doubt.

What a revealing admission. Forget about the fate of the Presidency. Forget about the Constitution. As long as the process helps Democrats' political fortunes, our Democratic colleagues call it a "win-win." Do these sound like leaders who really believe we are in a constitutional crisis, one that requires the most severe remedy in our entire system of government? Does it sound like that?

Here is how deep we have come into bizarro world. The latest Democratic talking point is, if the Senate conducts a trial based on what the House itself

looked at, we will be engaged in a coverup. Did you get that? Unless the Senate steps outside of our lane and takes it upon ourselves to supplement the House case, it is a coverup?

Do they think the entire country has forgotten what they were saying just a couple of days ago? We heard over and over that the House case, on its own, was totally damning and convincing. That is what they were saying a few days ago.

Clearly, a majority of the House felt that it was sufficient to impeach, and a number of Senate Democrats were happy to prejudice the case publicly and suggest the House had proven enough for removal.

But now, all of a sudden, the story has reversed. Now, we hardly know anything. Now, the investigation is just beginning. Now, what the House has produced is so weak that they are calling their own investigation a coverup. Who would be the author of this coverup—Chairman SCHIFF?

We have arrived at a simple contradiction. Two things cannot both be true. House Democrats' case cannot simultaneously be so robust that it was enough to impeach in the first place but also so weak that the Senate needs to go fishing. If the existing case is strong, there is no need for the judge and the jury to reopen the investigation.

If the existing case is weak, House Democrats should not have impeached in the first place. I think I am beginning to understand why the Speaker wanted to change the subject to tax policy. Unfortunately, no matter how irresponsibly this has been handled across the Capitol, impeachment is not a political game, and the U.S. Senate will not treat it like one.

A House majority fueled by political animus may have started this with frivolity, but it will fall to the Senate—to the Senate—to end it with seriousness and sobriety. It will fall to us to do what the Founders intended: to take the long view, to move beyond partisan passions, and to do what the long-term good of our institution and our Nation demands.

#### IRAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, every day brings more repudiation of the conventional wisdom of the Democratic foreign policy establishment, breathlessly—breathlessly—amplified by the mainstream media, that the strike on Soleimani would unite Iranians behind the regime. Remember, that is what they were all saying, that the strike on Soleimani would unite Iranians behind the regime. Proud Iranians continue, however, to take to the streets not to rage against America or Israel but to vent their frustration against the corrupt, theocratic regime that has led Iran down a ruinous path.

I spoke about these protests before the strike on Soleimani, and I will continue to speak out about them. I have

long believed the United States should care about human rights and democracy, whether in Russia, China, Hong Kong, Burma, Cuba, Venezuela, Afghanistan, Syria, or Iran. The promotion of human rights and the defense of democracy should not necessarily be the driving force of our foreign policy, but it should be an important component.

I ask my Democratic colleagues who share this view to set aside their hatred for Donald Trump—even just for a moment—and to step back to look at what has been happening across Iran for years: the repression of women, the persecution of ethnic and religious minorities, and the brutal suppression of dissent.

Was the Obama administration right to meet the 2009 Green Revolution with silence?

Consider the story of Iran's only female Olympic medalist, who this week defected—defected—from Iran and requested asylum; or the Iranian state TV broadcasters who quit, apologizing to the public for years of lying on behalf of the mullahs; or the innocent protesters who are being killed and wounded by agents of the state.

These are well-known realities. They were well known when, 12 days ago, the United States took the most dangerous terrorist off the battlefield, but mystifyingly, many voices here in Washington and the media sought to blame the escalating tensions in the region on President Trump.

We heard from leading Democrats that the operation to eliminate Soleimani was one of the administration's "needless provocations"—needless provocations. We heard that the cycle of violence was America's responsibility. All of this—all of it—flies in the face of the reasonable analysis some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle were offering before—before—Donald Trump became President.

In 2007, 30 Democratic Senators joined Republicans to support an amendment warning of the need to prevent "Iran from turning Shia militia extremists in Iraq into a Hezbollah-like force that could serve its interests inside Iraq, including by overwhelming, subverting, or coopting institutions of the legitimate government of Iraq." That was back in 2007, with 30 Democrats.

Few more prescient warnings have been pronounced by this body, but, unfortunately, it went unheeded by the Obama administration, which withdrew U.S. forces from Iraq, effectively abandoning it to Soleimani and his proxies.

As recently as 2015, the Democratic leader warned that the JCPAO failed to address Iran's destabilizing malign activities and that Iran would use its windfall to "redouble its efforts to create even more trouble in the Middle East and, perhaps, beyond." That was the Democratic leader in 2015.

Senator MENENDEZ hit the nail on the head as well. He warned: "If there